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“THE SURETY OF THE UPRIGHT.”

A DISCOURSE

PREACHED ON THE OCCASION OF

The National Fast,

JUNE 1, 1865,

In the First Parish Meeting-House, Saco, Maine,

BY THE PASTOR.

J. H. Windsor

Saco, Maine

PUBLISHED BY SPECIAL REQUEST.

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SERMON.

Convened to-day, my friends, in response to the proclamation of the Chief Magistrate of the nation, for the purpose of honoring the memory of him who so recently executed its counsels, and around whose bier, as of that of a martyr, the people have so universally gathered for the last offices of a cherished affection—how can we better improve the occasion than by a review of the life and services of our late lamented Chief. And in that review can we find words more appropriately expressing that life, with its consecration to country and to God, than those of the Royal Preacher, contained in the 10th Chapter of Proverbs and the 9th verse, “HE THAT WALKETH UPRIGHTLY WALKETH SURELY.”

For to do right is better than to possess a kingdom. This condition of all true greatness enforced by a Bible Philosophy has ever been, is constantly being illustrated in Human History. This Scriptural idea of a true life Providence is ever unfolding to men, and has held up to the esteem, the confidence, and the love of the American People in the character of Abraham Lincoln.

If at any time we are justified in rehearsing the virtues of the departed, in eulogizing their name or their deeds, one motive alone should control such action; a motive that springs from a hope to re-produce those virtues in the living. And thus, while nothing that the choicest eloquence or the fondest affections could utter shall in the least affect the dead, in whose quiet homes nor human hate or love can disturb, may a review of their life stimulate us to re-produce the good and the worthy in their character. With such a motive let us look at the life and services of our deceased President.

Among those qualifications of character or condition which so providentially fitted him for his great trust we at once recognize the *circumstances of his early life*.

Mr. Lincoln was a man *from the people*. Not only one among them,

but one *of* them. He belonged to the Aristocracy of the masses, not of the few; of nature not of art. His claim to notice and to confidence gains not an iota from ancestry, wealth or power, beyond, indeed, the claims of an honest, hard-working, pious parentage.

He was poor by birth. Toil, self-denial, and self-reliance, that "Triumvirate" of real worth, were among his earliest experiences. In common with his toilsome father he was compelled, from early boyhood, to take his share in the common inheritance of doing something for a livelihood. Those first years, passed in the backwoods of a Western State, at a great remove from the so called amenities of cultivated society, trained him—not in the culture of the schools—in the use of the axe, of the plough, of the sickle; all other, his strictly educational advantages of early life, beyond his own personal efforts to obtain them, were comprised in six months at the District School House of his own neighborhood.

He was most emphatically a *self-made* man: the former of his own fortune; and a favoring Providence, smiling upon and directing a faithful self-sacrifice, is the explanation of that elemental greatness that was fitting him for the highest trust in the nation.

In this lowly origin; its obscurity; its demands upon a retrenching economy; its privations; its associates and associations, Abraham Lincoln was allying himself with the common people. And in these outwardly infelicitous beginnings we recognize a wise Providence. He was to be the ruler of a people whose civil polity is so essentially a government of and by the masses. He was also to be the Leader of a down-trodden race, their Joshua to the Canaan of Liberty; he must know of poverty, of trial, of obscurity, in order that he may be one with the people. It is in such toils, in such an origin that we find the germ of that broad and generous sympathy which linked him so closely with all who were needy; the almost magic power he had over the people; a power not alone of greatness, but that other and winning power, the power of a neighborly, hearty, appreciating fellow-feeling. Treading the lowlier walks of social life, Mr. Lincoln was practically alive to its interests and its claims: you could not raise him above a fellow-feeling for the people; in the truest sense he was a "*plebeian*," and we have cause for devout gratitude to God that he was.

It was, in part, this straitness of condition, hallowed by Parental example, that laid the foundation for that industry, that useful view of things; that common sense which enabled him to regard men and measures from the stand-point of their practical worth, and to divest them of merely abstract, bewildering theories. And these qualifications, resting upon a remarkably clear judgment, kept him from being lost amid the labyrinths and breakers of a most perilous administration.

In our Departed Leader we discern also a *rare honesty* of heart. Here he was above all suspicion. In this he was of "the noblest work of God." Even his enemies—and of these he had as few as any one could have had, who should have been called to fill his position at such a crisis—cannot lay a finger upon a dishonest act, his own. Among his neighbors this virtue secured for him the somewhat homely yet noble cognomen of "Honest Abe;" as chief of the nation, the social and neighborhood became the national title, and still he was "Honest Abe."

This honesty was perhaps the outgrowth of a certain *inborn sense of the fitness of things*. Mr. Lincoln's system of morals was ultimate and not accessory. Right, because it is Right, was his motto. How transparently clear does this rectitude of purpose show itself in his whole public life! With temptations to the contrary such as befall few men, the first exponent of a so styled new political party, what might he not have been expected to have done for that party! But instead of such expediences his justness of view embraces the whole public good. And even in the choice of his Advisers, as well of those who should fill high positions in the Field, we find men of all previous political preferences: the one test being, is he true, is he qualified for the post. In these particulars he might have regarded partizanship more, —if indeed he were ever moved by merely sectional interests—and still have preserved the bounds of the majority of his Predecessors. But no. He was above an unmanly chicanery. This to the "man-born" integrity, this single-eyed justness fitted the President to administer justice upon broad and ultimate principles: to give to all their due; to respect the persons of none in judgment; to give due weight to any appeal to the right come whence or how it may. And so it was that with the exception of his kindness of heart, amid that brilliant galaxy of virtues that brightened in the man, none shone with a steadier

brilliancy than his *correct and impassioned judgment*. This raised him largely, we do not say perfectly, above the fog and the side lights of party favor and sectional interests. His citizenship, as that of our first fathers, was the whole country; his duty, her welfare. Toward this these salient and rare qualities were ever directing him. Mark their influence in his straightforward conceptions of the Declaration of Independence, and of our Fathers' interpretation of its self-evident truths :

This was their interpretation of the economy of the universe, this their lofty, wise and noble understanding of the justice of the Creator to his Creatures—to the whole family of man. In their enlightened belief nothing stamped with the Divine Image and Likeness was sent into the world to be trodden on, and degraded, and imbruted by its fellows. * * * * Wise statesmen as they were, they knew the tendency of prosperity to breed tyrants, and so they established these great self-evident truths, that when, in the distant future, some man, some faction, some interest, should set up the doctrine that none but rich men, or none but white men, or none but Anglo-Saxon white men, were entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, their posterity might look up again to the Declaration of Independence, and take courage to renew the battle which their fathers began, so that truth, and justice and mercy, and all the humane and Christian virtues might not be extinguished from the land; so that no man would hereafter dare to limit the great principles on which the temple of Liberty was being built.

We observe, also, in Mr. Lincoln an *independence and self-reliance of judgment* that strengthened him in following the dictates of a clear head and an honest heart. Virtues these, which if controlled by an impassioned nature and a pure patriotism, are among the choicest as they appeal the most strongly to a people's confidence in their Chief Ruler. In our lamented President, however, this self-confidence was never self-opinioned. He was ready to ask counsel from his Constitutional Advisers; not above seeking help, to enable him to decide, he yet seems to have followed the leadings of his personal judgment upon all questions and measures of which he felt himself confident to be the judge: a quality that saves a Ruler much confusion amid the counter-currents of an officious, intermeddling, and a man-pleasing expediency.

And because of this he was *comprehensive* in his views. President Lincoln did not act hastily because he did not decide hastily. He took the time to look over the whole field embraced in a given measure or plan. Hence his readiness to yield to the logic of events; his wise conservatism, and again his universal justness of action. Hence he became the exponent of *principles*, and of party only as party embodied principles. The Constitution, the Union, and Liberty are the key notes to his Administration.

This innate clearness and breadth of view, upreared upon justice and

integrity, led him to the deservedly great acts of his public life. Therefore it was he put his seal to the writ of freedom in the District of Columbia: therefore he signed that paper which alone will make his name a household word and his administration a cherished era in our nationality, that paper which shall be the "Great Magna Charta" for the rallying of the oppressed in every land, the bright and the glorious Deed of Emancipation. Frown and favor were equally ignored in this determination of fearless honesty to do justly. Hear it as with chosen words it confirms the righteous act:

I repeat the declaration I made a year ago, and that while I remain in my present position I shall not attempt to retract or modify the emancipation proclamation, nor shall I return to slavery any person who is free by the terms of that proclamation, or by any of the acts of Congress. If the people should, by whatever mode or means, make it an executive duty to re-inslave such persons, another, not I, must be their instrument to perform it.

And again—

Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet if God wills that it continue until all the wealth of the bondmen's 250 years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said 5000 years ago, so still it must be said that the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

This comprehensive justice recommended the Constitutional Amendment, so that henceforth the Charta of the nation should be construed in favor of Liberty; and in the following forcible terms repeated the recommendation:

At the last session of Congress a proposed amendment of the Constitution, abolishing slavery throughout the United States, failed for lack of the requisite two-thirds vote in the House of Representatives. Although the present is the same Congress and nearly the same members, and without questioning the wisdom or patriotism of those who stood in opposition, I venture to recommend the re-consideration and passage of the measure at the present session. Of course the abstract question is not changed, but an intervening election shows almost certainly that the next Congress will pass the measure. * * * It is the voice of the people, now for the first time, heard upon the question. In a great national crisis like ours, unanimity of action, among those seeking common ends, is very desirable and almost indispensable, and yet no approach to unanimity is allowable, unless some deference shall be paid to the will of the majority, simply because it is the will of the majority.

In this case our common end is the maintenance of the Union; and among the means to secure that end, such will, through the election, is most clearly declared in favor of such constitutional amendment.

He was then true to justice and to freedom: equitable to all parts of the country; firm in sustaining the right at all hazards; this he was "willing to live by, and, if it be the pleasure of Almighty God, to die by." His convictions slowly received were unshaken when reached. Some of his friends were at times fearful that this conservatism and tenderness of nature might fetter him in meeting the claims of an imperilled freedom and a fratricidal treason; but in the event, did we not see that our fears were groundless, as we felt the superior discretion of the man whose broad and dispassionate acts were meeting each emer-

gency as it came, firmly marshalling the whole power of the government for its support or its overthrow?

And on the other hand this self-same justness of character kept him from a vindictive treatment of the foes of the nation. It was seen in the unshaken will, that calm counsels and equitable measures should control; a determination—so long as it were possibly consistent with the public safety—to preserve inviolate the Constitutional privileges of the rebellious States themselves, and as interpreted by them; therefore the famous Fremont order was modified, and subsequently that of Gen. Hunter; (orders that anticipated by a few months only the course which the Government was compelled to pursue) this it was that recommended a gradual emancipation in Mr. Lincoln's first message to Congress. In view of these facts, is it presumptuous to say, that but few men, raised as he, and under the pressure of events with which he came to the government, would have governed themselves and the people with such wise forbearance? And yet we hear of violations of the Constitution; of overbearing power; of party measures; of a settled determination to override liberty, justice and law, as though the whole crime and responsibility of this war lay at the door of the freedom-loving and loyal North? Fact and theory prove the charge false.

Mr. Lincoln was also a *modest* man. This essential accompaniment of true nobility shone with a mild brilliance through his whole life. Parade of power was not in him. He was Jeffersonian in the simplicity of his adornments. Republicanism has seldom been more truthfully embodied in that absence of pomp, and that glittering of titles, forms and fashions which do so much to sustain a throne, as when it sat in the chair of the sixteenth Presidency at Washington. The greatness of a Republic consists not in its surroundings, but in itself, it is sense and not sound; this grand distinction President Lincoln held up steadily and truthfully during his whole life at the Capitol.

How this plainness of demeanor shows itself when as a conqueror he entered Richmond! What an illustration of conscious power, of fatherly love and confidence! A father, in the manner of a father, unattended by an army of gleaming bayonets, with serried front and overweening pride to fatten upon the defeats of the foe, he goes with his dear boy by his side, in all the beauty of home love to counsel, to

sympathize with and to bless his wayward children. I have said that he relied not upon the good right arms that had opened the way into the long beleaguered city, but he did not make his entrance wholly without a retinue. So soon as it was found that he was there, the word was passed on through friend and through foe, and the good man was speedily surrounded by a body guard, composed of exultant, dusky warriors; shouting not in the notes of war, but with the glad accents of a peaceful liberty, the praises of their Deliverer, as in the earnest tones of the African tongue blessings were implored upon his head. There goes the modest man, the head of one of the greatest kingdoms the sun shines upon, a victor, making his entrance upon a conquered province, no peal of trumpets, no waving of banners, no heraldry and show of power; save as the dark clouds flanking him on either hand bespoke his power, his goodness, his love of justice, his safety, and his peans of welcome are the benedictions of the enfranchised slave.

Observe, moreover, the modesty of the man as it appears in the matter and the form of his public papers. These, many of which promised in themselves fame enough for the highest ambition, all of them, couched in terms so quietly diffident that we almost forget the man in the deed. Mark this spirit in that matchless close to the *Charta of Liberty*: “Upon this sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God.” In that paper, which of itself is sufficient, will be sufficient to stamp his administration with the accordant and swelling praises of the nations in all coming time: that which dealt the final blow at the rebellion because it struck at its true vitality: that which is the crowning excellence of the past four years of mingled trial and blessing: that which is the *characteristic* of the late Presidential Term—how modestly it reads, how little of drawing attention to the noble heart that concerned it. And this, my friends, is the modesty of true greatness; one of the attractive though mildly shining virtues in his life.

But there is a certain charm about the character of Mr. Lincoln that more than all enshrines his memory in the nation’s affection, it is his *kindliness of heart*. This it is upon which we so much love to dwell,

and towards which we ever find our thoughts turning when we think of the man,—and of the dark deed which took him from us, the darker by reason of the true loveliness of its victim. He was a Father to his Countrymen ; even to his rebellious children he showed the never-failing tenderness of a Parent. Hear how he expostulates with those who sought his life, and what was dearer still to him the life of the nation ; mark the patient, the mild, the paternal expostulation, and as you read love the more :

My Countrymen, one and all, think calmly and well upon this whole subject. Nothing valuable can be lost by taking time. Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken his favored land, are still competent to adjust, in the best way, all our difficulties.

In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The Government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the Government ; while I shall have the most solemn one to preserve, protect and defend it !

Will you hazard so desperate a step, while any portion of the ills you fly from have no real existence ? Will you, while the certain ills you fly to, are greater than all the real ones you fly from ? All profess to be content in the Union if all Constitutional rights can be maintained. Is it true, then, that any right, plainly written in the Constitution has been denied ? I think not. * * * * I am loth to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break the bonds of our affection. The mystic chord of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

This at the commencement of his Presidency and with the terrible fact of civil war full in view : the close of that Presidential Term, and the two-fold honor of victorious arms and the reaffirmed choice of the people that he should still rule over them, did not abate of that calm consideration and expostulating love, as with a renewed devotion to his country's welfare he writes :

So long as I have been here I have not willingly planted a thorn in any man's bosom. While I am duly sensible to the high compliment of a re-election and duly grateful as I trust, to Almighty God for having directed my countrymen to a right conclusion, as I think, for their good, it adds nothing to my satisfaction that any other man may be disappointed by the result. May I ask those who have not differed with me to join with me in this same spirit toward those who have.

And —

With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphans : to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves and all nations.

It is such a tenderness of love, such a thoughtful regard for others' welfare that bind him so closely to our hearts, that open their innermost chambers of cherished affection for the indwelling of the good man's memory. And when the life and services of Abraham Lincoln are recorded upon the Historic page, or more lovingly still, are embalmed in the hearts and the homes of the nation, there, above all,

pervading all, adorning even the severer passages of his life of faithful service for his country, will be the home love, the warm and sympathizing heart that moved in and hallowed all the rest.

A review of such a life, however, is not complete that leaves out his *unshaken confidence* in God.

President Lincoln was not a religious boaster ; but he was eminently under the control of a religious fear. In his usual frank manner he leaves us in no doubt about his religious history, while in substance, he says :

When I went to Washington I was not a Christian, though I reverenced the Christian faith ; but when, on the bloody field of Gettysburg, I looked in the musings of my soul upon the countless dead, those cheerful martyrs for my country, then and there I hope I gave myself to Christ.

We have buried a *Christian* Ruler ; one who loved to recognize his dependence upon God ; who, from first to last, cast himself in faith upon the prayers of the faithful, and the all wise Ruler of Heaven and earth. So all-pervading is this spirit of humble trust, that we can place our hand upon scarcely a public document of his in which this truth is not acknowledged. And those unfoldings of this life of trust away from the dim and bewilderments of official cares ; that affectionate tribute to his devotional spirit, to his childlike faith which a Pastor's heart has given over the dust of the martyred man ; the unostentatious request to a minister of the gospel, at the close of an interview upon official business, for prayer—these shew where the deeper currents of his life were sweeping, and the sources of that strength which held him up in the midst of toils and responsibilities that have fallen to the lot of few before him. Is it presumptuous to say that in his experience the promise was fulfilled, “I will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is staid on Thee, *because he trusteth in Thee?*”

Such is an imperfect sketch of him whom the nation is mourning. Such was the man who died, a martyr to Freedom. Struck down by the hand of cowardly hate, in the back, a hatred too mean to look into that open, honest, manly face and strike the blow. And he was killed in a theatre. Do we thereby endorse the frequenting for amusement those resorts of vice ; those devises for killing time and dissipating morals ; by no means. We would our revered President had met his end, if he must be murdered, upon other ground and under other circumstances, yet was it the goodness of his heart, for the time overcoming

his usually clear judgment that induced him to go, that the people might not be disappointed. With no advocacy, then, for the theatre, but with every objection to it from its evils and its evil tendencies, I still find myself judging with leniency an act flowing from so kindly a motive as that which led our late President like a sheep to his slaughter.

For Mr. Lincoln we make no claim to blamelessness of life, nor would we be chargeable with the folly of a fulsome adulation. He was a man. But he was a man of a thousand. He was a man of rare purity of life, of speech, of judgment and of sense; of far-seeing and philosophical mind: of honesty crystal in its clearness; of a genuine kindness of soul that as the gentle heat of the sun in time of bud and blossom distils a generous warmth and life throughout his entire course; and he was of *unimpeachable*, unsuspicious, and unsuspected patriotism; while through all, chastening, directing, elevating all, was a simple trust in God.

True to thy God,—thou cans't not then be false
To man, nor traitor to thy country prove,—
Most loyal, if thy loyalty have root
In love of Heaven, for Freedom and the Right!

Seldom are a people called to mourn such a Ruler. This wise counsellor; pure patriot; beneficent father; wicked hands have slain. The assassination of so good and so great a man, so needed as we thought, so widely beloved as he was, naturally suggests an enquiry as to the cause of his death. What killed him? Why did he die? Bear with me, my friends, then in a rapid review of the cause of that murder as it shows itself in the history of that which, in the blow that fell upon our martyred Lincoln, aimed at the life of the Republic.

That he was a victim to the same spirit that brought upon us this civil war is beyond a reasonable doubt. His murder was no tragedy; it was not the work of insanity. If tragedy there were it was the same that has been enacted these four years in the dark dramas of Southern Prisons; in the chivalrous attempts to weaken our forces by deliberately starving our braves; if insanity there were, it was no more, no less blameworthy than that moral insanity which has run its mad course against the nation's peace and the nation's life. The tragedy is that of the slave power enacted ever upon the theatre of human woes and human life; the madness is the madness of the traitor;

of both which much has been seen and heard these four years past. The death of President Lincoln was the bitter ripening of the fruit of that Upas Tree which since the existence of the American Nationality has been throwing its poisonous shadows so widely and with such pestilential blastings over the continent.

Let us refresh our memories and in calm review confirm these assertions.

“Liberty (said the fearless preacher to Louis 14th) belongs to human nature.”

“We hold, (said our Fathers) these truths to be self-evident, that all men are born free and equal; endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; among them are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” And the French Divine and our Revolutionary Heroes were right. But in the face of these self-evident and birthright truths, from the adoption, almost, of our Constitution, through to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, Slavery has had the strong hand in our Government. The minority has ruled the majority, the very antithesis of popular government. Its demands, made with a presumption equalled only by its guilt, were answered by concessions. Is this not true? Let us see; why was the three-fifth clause engrafted into our Constitution? Why were the first thirty-six Presidential years, if we except one term, under the administration of Southern Presidents? What meant the mode and provisos in our purchase of Louisiana? What testimony does the Missouri Compromise give? What the war with Mexico; the Fugitive Slave Bill; the Burns decision; the Dred Scott verdict; the Kansas and Nebraska Bill; the attempted purchase of Cuba! What, my friends, is the concurrent testimony of these facts, patent in the history of our legislation?

That no one may suppose an unfair statement of the case, hear again what honorable Senators and Governors from the South themselves have said, and in their undisguised words and arrogant demands read the same truths. Said a Senator from Virginia, in his place upon the floor of the Senate Chamber, as he repeated the demands of the Slave Power upon the National Government, and reaffirmed that which alone would satisfy the South; among other demands:

Congress shall have no power to abolish Slavery in the States or the District of Columbia or the dockyards, forts, and arsenals of the United States.

Congress shall not abolish, tax, or obstruct the Slave trade between the States.

It shall be the duty of the States to restore fugitive Slaves, or pay the value of the same, &c., &c.

An Ex-Governor of South Carolina in a letter written at the close of 1860, says :

Slavery is stronger than the Union. I don't think there is the least chance of re-constructing the Confederation on the former basis. *We will have no other Union than one in which the Slave power shall largely and permanently predominate.*

The following extract is significant upon the often repeated charge against the Government, of violating Constitutional privileges; it is from the Governor of Florida's annual message of Nov. 1860 :

I most decidedly declare that the proper action is secession from our faithless, perfidious confederates. But some Southern men object to secession *until some overt act of unconstitutional power shall have been committed by the General Government*; that we ought not to secede, until the President and Congress unite in passing an act unequivocally hostile to our institutions, and fraught with immediate danger to our rights of property. *But why wait for this overt act of the Government?*

And because the freedom-loving citizens of the land decided in a constitutional manner, with all quietness and order, that these demands can no longer be acceded to, and that henceforth the Government must be administered in the interests of "equal rights to all," in the place of a peaceable acquiescence to the will of this constitutional majority, (as the North had acquiesced—against their convictions of justice, for more than fifty years) the Slave Power demanded a re-organization of the Federal Government, so as to confirm to it forever all it demanded; and when every sense of right and of humanity cried out against such a course, then and there disappointed lust of power began to work of treason and of war. And thus the war came. Five millions insolently demanding of twenty millions that their own individual demands should be yielded, right or wrong, in accordance with or opposed to the will of the majority.

Thus, my friends, the crime had worked, as a deadly virus, into the whole body politic! Senators dared, with shameless face, almost unre-buked, to flaunt treason under the very dome of the Capitol; officers of the Government, educated and paid out of its treasury, openly or secretly plotting its overthrow; nay, in the very Cabinet itself, among the Counsellors of the Chief Ruler of the people, covert fraud or more open treason was weakening the effective force of the nation to oppose the full born treason when its time should have come.

The South being judge, the unconcealed boasts of its chief men being

witnesses, this conspiracy was a long cherished plan. For more than a generation there were those elected to choose righteous laws that the people may be governed well, whose avowed object was to prepare the way for a dismembered nationality, and a Confederacy the chief corner stone of which was to be Slavery. What no longer could be accomplished in concessions to unrighteous demands, was attempted by the tragic insanity of secession and a civil war. And thus the war came.

What then, in all candor, what, from the past was the prospect for the future? What, but the riveting of the chains of oppressive domination? What, but the widening of the area of the Slave Power? What, but the wheeling of the whole force of the Government into the services of oppression! Continued concession meant, and meant only concession to the Slave-interests.

Then and thus (as a candid review of our history for the past fifty years clearly shows), came the issue. The South would have war rather than the Government should continue as it was, the North would rather accept war than a national dismemberment. And thus the war came! Who inaugurated it? whose is the responsibility of all this outpouring of blood and of treasure? Let an impartial review of the past answer. The issue came. Sumter electrified the nation. Its thunders were the mutterings of the storm whose wild sweep has strewn desolations and wrecks throughout the whole land. But it was the beginning of the end. The supporters of the Government said the land shall be free. The sophistry of State Rights shall not be longer construed for sectional interests; if war must come, we accept war, and relying upon the God of truth and justice we will do valiantly for liberty and the right; our children shall be free. And the war came. Its years of sorrows, such as this fair land had never witnessed, have been stern but faithful instructors. Through the gloom and the night we have learned where our true strength lay. We have found that *justice is the mightiest power in the Universe*; we have heard that cry which for wearisome years had been going up into the ear of the God of Justice elsewhere, here, at home, around our own hearthstones, as the wailings of unrequited toil have been, are now being re-echoed in the sighings of stricken hearts and homes that in vain wait for the loved and the departed. The terrible fulfillments of the bondman's

curse have swept the broad Savannahs of the South as a Simoon; they have fallen in the bitterness of grief upon the peaceful firesides of the North, until all are realizing that justice is the mightiest power in the Universe. There is power in the cry of the oppressed; their Deliverer is mighty. And though at the first we would not heed it, we have heeded it; justice has in part been done. For—

* Beginning the war upon Political grounds, we have been compelled to advance it to moral grounds. Beginning the war, on the part of Rulers and Generals, that looked to the conservation of Slavery as well as of the Union, both rulers and generals, and soldiers and people, have been taught that the Union can be preserved only through the destruction of Slavery. We could not have it otherwise if we would. We have no choice in the matter, and have had none from the first. It was Slavery that prompted the Rebellion; it was Slavery that was to profit by the war; it was the Slave Power that would arise upon the ruins of the Constitutional Union and Liberty; and to save these we were compelled to smite the smiter and destroy the destroyer. Slavery had so far triumphed over the politics of the country, over the commerce of the country, and even over the religion of the country, that only a war which should exterminate its roots from the soil, could check its growing supremacy. The war was rendered a necessity by the alarming encroachments of that huge organic iniquity that lifted itself against all the forces and aims of modern civilization.

And since we have begun to do justly, the tide of success has set steadily toward the Government. Truth, Liberty, Right have triumphed; the rebellion is overcome; the war, we fondly trust, is over; we are anxiously, yet with overflowing hearts waiting to welcome the armies of Freedom to our hearthstones. He under whose wise and firm rule, by the blessing of God, this victory was accomplished, lives not on earth to witness the glorious results of his toil and his sacrifice; but though dead he lives; his soul is marching on through the land and awakening in every valley and upon every mountain top the new born anthems of a regenerated nationality.

But the work is not done. Success is not all. We have now to gird ourselves for another and a scarcely less momentous responsibility, viz: *wisely to use our victories*. In the excitement of the conquest we must not forget how it was secured. In one word it was by doing justly. “He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely.” In the rebuilding of the wastes this war has made, we cannot lose sight of the great price wherewith we purchased this freedom. Justice is still the mightiest power in the Universe. It must be admitted in the interests of the *enfreed slave*. He has fought and fought bravely, for us; he has risked everything for our success. With a generous forgetfulness of our treatment of him he has never refused a call we have made upon him for his help; his blood has mingled with that of other patriots on

the ensanguined field ; his knowledge and his patriotism we have used, he has unhesitatingly, cheerfully given them ; always true to the old flag, him we could trust. And though in the first months of the war we repulsed these generous offers, scorning to learn of a slave, sending him back again to his toil and his chains, the sad experience of the course shewed us our folly, our sin. Justice has been begun to be meted out to the patriot of color. A military necessity first broke the dawning of what we most devoutly trust is to be the full-orbed day of a completed liberty by the universal voice of the nation. But justice has been only begun. We must go on to do justly ; following the leadings of a wise freedom, fearlessly and unhesitatingly. And for ourselves, no less than for the colored race, if we would reap the full blessings of these years of sorrow *we must give the full franchise to the enfreed slave.* This rebellion is conquered but in name if we fail to give the freedman the right to a voice in the election of his rulers. *Wherever there is intelligence sufficient to understand the responsibilities of the franchise, give the privilege.* And where this does not now exist, as it cannot in the great majority of the liberated bondmen, let them be educated so that they can understand and can intelligently exercise the first and most sacred privilege of the Republic. Do this and Slavery is forever banished the Continent ; withhold it and we have a conflict before us that generations to come must share in and suffer for.

Justice must be done the *leaders of the rebellion.* The public conscience must be quickened respecting the awfulness of that crime that strikes at the nation's life. The American nation must feel, and must show to the civilized world by its action, that *Treason is a foul crime, not a misfortune.* It is national murder ; its only adequate punishment is the penalty of murder. Its true nature cannot be better expressed than in the words of the chief leader of the rebellion when, in a speech in Fanueil Hall, Boston, in 1858, he said :

Among culprits, there is none more odious to my mind than a public officer who takes an oath to support the Constitution—the compact between the States binding each other for the common defence and general welfare of the other—yet retains to himself a mental reservation that he will war upon the principles he has sworn to maintain, and upon the property rights, the protection of which are part of the compact of the Union. It is a crime too low to be named before this assembly. It is one which no man with self-respect would ever commit. To swear that he will support the Constitution—to take an office which belongs in many of its relations to all the States, and to use it as a means of injuring a portion of the States of which he is thus the representative, is treason to everything honorable in man. It is a base and cowardly attack of him who gains the confidence of another, in order that he may wound him.

The doctrine is sounder than the practice. Out of his own mouth let him be judged. And is this advocated because we love the taking of life? nay, by no means; but because we value its priceless boon too dearly to allow it recklessly to be imperilled. Without fear then of incurring the charge of bloodthirstiness, or of an unchristian spirit, terms, more commonly than carefully used, to deter us from the straightforward course of justice, we advocate an impartial trial of the chief traitors by a jury of their countrymen; if convicted, let them suffer the penalty justly due so wholesale, so wicked, so causeless, so savagely cruel a slaughter of the people. Wisely and firmly just we can then be wisely and considerately clement. But here, as in God's government, "justice and judgment must be the pillars of our throne, that righteousness and peace may go before us." Yet in the gloom and the night there have been gleams of a clear-shining after the storm.

Gratitude becomes us, my friends, in view of the watchful care of an overruling Providence during the war; that the national power and prosperity have been so largely maintained; that the internal resources of the country have been developed so wonderfully and in so increasing a ratio these four years; that the kindly social virtues, the sweet sympathies of the heart have been so much cherished. What other nation, may we not say, without boasting, would have passed through the scenes of the 14th of April last, with so little change in its civil and its social states. Our beloved leader assassinated; at a time when to us he seemed so essential to the nation; the treason that sought the life of the nation taking his; yet in a few hours his successor is quietly inaugurated, the wheels of government move on harmoniously and steadily as before, and with the exception of the universal weeping and wailing for the martyred dead, who would have supposed we had sustained a blow which would have sprung anarchy and bloody revolution upon almost any other people on the globe? There is a reserve of power in a *Christian* Republic. When Providence makes drafts upon that reserve they are always honored. The nation is not dead; nor is its civil status in the least imperilled; we are in no danger of military despotism, or civil disruption. The Lord hath done these things for us whereof we are glad.

Fearful as the trial has been, it is opening to us a future of glorious

promise. The iron hand has unlocked the gates of brass; war has levelled the high walls of a hoary prejudice, so that there is now a highway 'twixt the nations; this people are now entering upon one of the grandest eras of the world; the state and the church have before them a work rich in its bestowments; the servants of the Lord Jesus Christ are being ushered into the work of entering in and possessing the land; the harvest is waiving white; an enfreed South will demand and must have an unfettered gospel: the nation calls for, Christ wants, the times are demanding earnest, prompt, devoted workers. And the work has already begun. On the Southern slope of the dividing ridge an enfreed gospel is being proclaimed; self-sacrificing laborers have followed closely in the rear of the fight with the messages which heal the ills of the human heart and speak peace to the troubled; even now the busy hum of the school room is heard where the sons of an unrequited toil are being trained for a free nationality and a citizenship in the skies. All is not dark. O'erarching the blackness of the storm-girt horizon the bow appears; it sweeps the zenith; under its inspiring ægis we are to rise to a greatness and a justness of power equalled only by the grandeur of the ends this people are to accomplish in the economy of the world.

Not boastingly, but with faith to see and use the signs of promise, may we predict a united, a free, a stronger, a purer nationality by reason of the white heat that has welded it. Thus shall the nation, out of her own recent trials; from the examples of the good and the great of the past; confirmed and adorned in that pure, gentle, yet firm life so ruthlessly taken (yet not without its completion), learn that, for herself as for her lamented Chief, "to have walked uprightly, was to have walked surely."

Yes thou cherished and honored man we mourn thy death; but we may not murmur. The good Lord doeth all things well. We bless the hand that bestowed so rich and timely a gift upon us. The Lord, he it was who gave, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

But though absent thou art still with us. Thy memory we cherish in the living gratitude of the heart. We would thou couldst have lived to rejoice in the blessings thou wert the means of leaving to thy great

family. Thou leddest us up to the borders but wert not permitted to enter the land. Yet do we know the place of thy sleeping. We charge the home of thy adoption tenderly and securely to treasure thy dust in its flowery sepulchre; keep it thou prairied land till the last trump shall sound.

Rest then beloved leader in peace. And if from thy home on high thou art permitted to look again upon the widowed and the fatherless; to watch over the land and the people thou didst die to redeem, may it be to see thy toils, thy sacrifice and thy prayers fulfilled in a nation saved, and a land forever enfreed. Living we loved and we honored thee; departed we can best cherish thy memory by reproducing thy life.

Let us, my friends, so act, that in this opportunity of God's favoring Providence we may be enabled, from the desolations of the past, to rear a nationality that can truly be called, "The land of the free."

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